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a purpose, which is, in itself, an incentive and would leave no room for dangerous exclusions of parts. If the former theses were sustained showing that mathematics is not the only disciplinary study and that a mind can be developed with the aid of other subjects, then this abbreviated course of mathematics would prove ample for its share of discipline, and leave more time for those other topics which alike possess the dual merit—mental stimulus and practical ends.

It must be remembered that this course is intended for general students and is not supposed to form the be all and end all for specialists. They will seek an extension of their knowledge in those larger treatises to which they would eventually turn even if they waded through the padded books now in use.

In addition it is confidently believed that such a direct treatment would be equally valuable with the more elaborate treatises in arousing a deeper interest in mathematics and in developing exceptional geniuses.

Much attention has been lately given to the question how to teach mathematics; of more importance is the query how much mathematics should we teach.

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THE STUDY OF IRVING

The majority of children who knock at our high school doors, are the friends of American poets. Through the winsome lines of "Hiawatha" and "Snow-Bound," they have gained a love for Longfellow and Whittier, but classic prose is a sealed book. A few, who were trained in Froebel ways, have made acquaintance with Washington Irving through their study of old Dutch life in Manhattan. They have studied pen pictures from the "Knickerbocker," and have sketched and colored the quaint homes. As literature was revealed through the study of early history and geography, the children were delighted with the story of the little New York boy who prowled among the narrow streets, peered into the

quaint houses, studied the life and manners of the queer Dutch people, and stored away the threads of historic fact which were to be woven into the fanciful fabric of classic literature. But the privileged ones are very few who have been favored with our best methods, and the high school teacher must supplement much lack of training. The leading spirit is contagious, and the joy of the teacher in developing her theme, will be reflected in the keen pleasure of the children, and their ready sympathy with the work. The teacher must be suggestive, that the class may be conclusive. Let them search for material while she adds less accessible, important *data*, and the scholars draw deductions. The objective point is not reached by a bound, nor would this be productive of the best results. The gate of true learning opens through the path of thought, and by the mind's activity we hope for growth. We feel a sense of triumph as we work out an enigma, and it is well if the children be puzzled for the point. Though they wander pitifully, hopelessly, in the dark as it seems to them, let the teacher beware how she turn on her headlight of knowledge. Let them grope their way out into the gray dawn of intelligence, while the searchlight of close questioning shall enrich them with a flood of clear shining truth. The teacher should act as guide-post, to point the line of march. She need not despair, though the class seem long in the dark. Remember the guide-post still patiently points the way, though the children be lost deep in the woods. One after another a bright thought comes, and many heads work out the right solution.

In this way we have traced the life of Irving, and the class found a purpose in the lonely wandering of the child about New York. They saw that thoughtful observation in youth was the foundation of fame in later years; that the whole reading world paid grateful tribute for a studious childhood. They caught an inspiring thought from the simple incident of the Testament, found by the deathbed, inscribed with the name of the early love. It bespoke a reverence for God and a devotion to a cherished ideal, which were the anchors of a noble life.

Lowell's criticism we used in such measure as was adapted to the child, and we often found it the keynote of our reading. It led us into foreign fields, as we inquired, "Who was Cervantes, and *how* he 'met death in his gentle despair?'" and "Wherein was

Irving comparable to the great Spanish writer in his 'gravest sweet humour?'" Carefully chosen passages from the immortal "Don Quixote" were compared with selections from the American author, to show the propriety of the criticism, and stimulate the child to broader work.

We are "cabined, cribbed, confined" by limitations, as we attempt to follow the prescribed schedule of our schools. We must broaden the work. We want that it should ramify from the central theme into a wheel of thought which bears us onward with spokes pointed to all quarters. We do not propose an unabridged course in Irving, and what shall we substitute? What shall we glean from the great harvest of his thought, to give the children the ripest grain? For variety of theme, proving the symmetry of the author's power, the "Sketch-Book" proves a classic gem. But even here let us be careful how we pick and choose. The scholars are not trained thinkers. We must bait them. They have no cultivated taste. We must hold out tempting fruit. Let us remember the variety of life and mind with which we deal. Those scholars are very rare to whom life has been one long advantage. In some homes represented, there is scarcely a Bible, much less a dictionary. Many a dear child asks to borrow a small school dictionary that she may study her text at home. It is pitiful, appalling; nevertheless true. And if we visit these homes and wonder where we may sit down in safety, we shall not marvel at the lack of well-filled shelves. Under such conditions, the enthusiastic teacher must curb "vaulting ambition," and go slowly if she would work successfully. The children can absorb the best, if in a mild solution. But they must taste the fluid extract, before they can assimilate the solid beef of literature. She was a wise principal who announced to her fashionable school, "I have engaged a gentleman to teach you how to talk about a novel." The young ladies broke into applause, which would have been sighs of dismay had she told them, "You will have an instructor in literary criticism."

Before we open our "Sketch-Book" for close study, it seems wise to take a broader sweep of our author's work, and learn his range of history. The children recognize the great energy and industry of the man who utilized his ministry to Spain, in searching archives, collating from state papers, studying old temples, and

gathering material for his monumental work. At this most appropriate season, brilliant passages from the "Life of Columbus" reveal the great discoverer and navigator in a clearer light, and kindle the keenest interest. With the names of "Alhambra" and "Grenada" how the beauty sparkles and the vision broadens. The grand old castle and its people, the royal life within the walls, the Moorish history, the great queen whose fair fame is blotted by intolerance to a noted race, sweep past us in spectacular array, and as the themes develop, we clamor for more time to investigate the gorgeous pageant. But a remorseless system goads us to turn from these glowing pages of the past, and consider definite bits from the "Sketch-Book," an abridged edition.

Sleepy Hollow always beguiles the child. In its quiet corners he finds the "happiest spirit" and "gravest sweet humor" which characterize the author. He sees all that is mean and despicable, in the fawning, scheming, selfish, conceited, cowardly schoolmaster. One boy declares that "Ichabod was brutal because he *kicked his horse*," and all scorn his superstition, his vanity, and his fears. They see the propriety of his name. A bit of natural history proves how well the surname fits his style and bearing, and a little word study shows how aptly the "Ichabod" illustrated his fate. Just here we are in touch with our Quaker Poet, as we examine the index of our Whittier, and note the title "Ichabod." We read the poem and recall its meaning. A bit of American history is suggested with the thought of the "Fugitive Slave Law" that tempted a great statesman to sell his fair name for a mess of pottage. Through the cloud of disgrace shines the light of the gentle poet's sweetness, as he mourns with tender charity for this Goliath who lies low in the dust. The children grasp the lesson; they hear the warning note of a trust betrayed, and they learn the "sweetness of forgiving," from the different points of view.

We return to the school at Tarrytown, and the scholars introduce other pedagogues famed in story. One suggests the "Hoosier Schoolmaster." Another is acquainted with the infamous Squeers; a third tells the story of the noble Dr. Arnold. And we turn to "Snow-Bound" for a full memory lesson of that universal genius,

Who early gained the power to pay
His cheerful, self-reliant way.

The schoolmaster of "Deserted Village" offers another interesting sketch, and we follow the salient points of each, touching upon resemblances and differences in character. Out of our comparisons grow choice bits of composition. Each scholar may select his own hero, and reproduce the sketch, or moralize upon the personality. Here we develop such subjects as "The School of Sleepy Hollow Compared with Hillhouse High School," "The Ideal Teacher," "The Ideal School," "Early Days and Modern Ways," "The Mistakes of the Schoolroom," "Teacher and Scholar, the Best of Friends," "The Object of School Life."

Meanwhile the artists' pencils have been busy, and our text is rich in illustrations from this most suggestive theme. Ichabod, loose-jointed and floppy, appears sailing along the lanes under high wind. The schoolroom interior and exterior is depicted. Gunpowder and Dare-Devil are realistic with their respective traits. Ichabod leading the choir on Sunday is a favorite subject. The dance at Van Tassel's is full of animation, and the headless horseman actually hurling his pate at the trembling master, is an added tragedy in our studio. Sometimes a quiet, sleepy scene appears, as the Tappan Zee or the hazy hills.

If teacher or scholar be so fortunate as to have known this Hudson region, a point is gained. We have no ambition to transcend the author in his touches of the hooded mountains, the lordly river, and the sleepy dale; but experience may enforce the scene, and to have rambled through those quiet, winding ways, to have looked out upon the flowing river from the home nestled amid sweeping elms bordering the banks in a shaded dell—a picture of white stucco, gabled roof and clamboring ivy—to have rested by the grave of the busy man whose work of pen or slate is over, is an experience which deepens the value of biography. It rejoices us to have the light break in upon a little urchin who exclaims, "That is just right for Irving to live at *Sunnyside*. He always seems so bright and pleasant."

"Rip Van Winkle" is another sketch which captivates the children. They note the broad good-humor, the jollity and mirth. They find many an adjective to describe the hero, and though he interests and amuses them, they realize that his qualities are not sterling. The life is useless, because aimless. It has no foundation rock of character, and beneath the top layer of amiability

is a substratum of selfishness more subtle, more dangerous, than Ichabod's. The spirit of lawlessness, of irresponsibility, so fatal to good citizenship, the scholars are quick to note, and they recognize the insidious evil which has deadened all manliness, and wrecked a home. We are fortunate if we may read the sketch when the inimitable actor is in town, that the children may see the grandest temperance lesson which stage or story has revealed.

Meantime we have gained strength for stronger work, and are somewhat prepared to read the scroll of English history which unrolls before us as we approach Westminster. Within its walls how often history repeats itself, and every inch of ground seems sacred. Children usually have a most indefinite idea of the great Abbey, and numerous views illustrating the various paragraphs of the "Sketch" assist our study. At first, queer answers come to random questions. If we ask for the celebrities buried here, Shakspeare invariably leads the list. The untaught child has reached the natural conclusion that the greatest of England's writers should rest in her grandest tomb. But the answer bids us stroll away to Avon, and in the modest church by the winding stream, invite the child to read upon the grave that curious inscription which precludes all noted burial.

In the Abbey the lines which we trace on a single slab, are suggestive hints of a whole life history. Explorers, discoverers, scientists; poets, artists, historians; generals, statesmen, monarchs; what an array is this! What a *résumé* of past goodness, greatness, glory! What a contrast is suggested in life's purposes and projects! The royal trappings and armorial bearings pale beside the names of heroes whose glorious deeds shall be immortal. The word "crusaders" strikes fire from flint in our classroom, and we sweep our lens over the broad fields of Medieval history. The children are ready to think and discuss, and it pays to give them time. They bring out the spear and the lance of the Middle Ages. They picture the noble steed and the brave knight in his coat of mail. They study his life and times, and the object of his quest. Here is the teacher's opportunity to enforce a practical significance from the knightly motto of "*Noblesse oblige*." From our topical studies and discussions suggested by the text, grow the composition themes: "The

Story of the Crusades," "The Knight of the Middle Ages," "The Results of the Crusades on European Life," "Knighthood of Today."

As we linger with Irving in the fretted chapel of Henry Seventh, Moreford's exquisite poem, "The Two Queens in Westminster," adds a charm to our work. The little people are fascinated by the contrasts in the royal women, and express most positive sentiments on the "Parallel between Queen Bess and Queen Mary," or on the question, "Was the Execution of Queen Mary Justifiable?" The compositions do not equal their subjects in strength. They are childish, hence we know that they are genuine. They are thoughtful, therefore they are hopeful. As we reach the Poets' Corner in our stroll through the Abbey, we note the range of master minds from Chaucer to Tennyson, and the class are in touch with the sympathy reaching from the old world to the new, as they find *our Children's Poet* in a favored niche.

With all its beauty and its grandeur, its rich memories of the past, its time-honored pageant to aid her, let the teacher ask herself whose fault it is if the class are not delighted with our classic prose exemplified in this stately sketch of the "Abbey."

Certain gem passages from Irving have become crystallized in our memories. One or two descriptions of Hudson river scenery are our own, and they will speak for us more eloquently than we can hope to do, as we traverse the majestic stream. The music of the great organ of the Abbey is our possession, and we are filled with the hope of goodness as it rolls its power upon the soul or as the airy voices of the choir recede in the distance.

The final passages from the "Abbey" sum up all that we mean, but cannot say, of the grand cathedral and we have made them ours so surely that Memory cannot lose her claim upon the lines. As we suggest a memory service for April third, we meet such ready response, we have such fund of material in artists' sketches, topical studies, compositions and quotations, as should rejoice the heart of any teacher who claims to be both sensible and sanguine.

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